

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9311

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

:/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON 893

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GEORGETOWN 0181

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, GY

SUBJECT: UNIONS ISSUE BACK TO WORK CALL IN SUGAR INDUSTRY STRIKE

REF:GEORGETOWN 0167

1. SUMMARY: STRIKING UNIONS HAVE ISSUED BACK TO WORK CALL IN SUGAR INDUSTRY AFTER REACHING SETTLEMENTS WITH SUGAR PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION. HOWEVLZ, END OF STRIKE DOES NOT MARK END TO CONTINUING DISPUTE BETWEEN RIVAL UNIONS AND GOVERNMENT OVER WHO REPRESENTS GUYANA'S SUGAR WORKERS. END SUMMARY.

2. AS ANTICIPATED (REFTEL), BACK TO WORK CALL ISSUED FEB. 6 BY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL, CLERICAL, AND INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES(NAACIE) AND GUYANA AGRICULTURAL WORKER UNION(GAWU) TO END STRIKE IN SUGAR INDUSTRY. NAACIE GENERAL SECRETARY BERTIS BANGAREE TOLD CLERICAL WORKERS TO RETURN TO WORK AFTER MEETING WITH SUGAR PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION (SPA) AT MINISTRY OF LABOR AND AGREEING ON TERMS OF ARBITRATION IN DISPUTE WITH EPA. GAWU ALSO MET WITH SPA AT MINISTRY OF LABOR AND REPORTEDLY AGREED TO CALL FIELD AND FACTORY WORKERS

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BACK TO JOBS AFTER SETTLEMENT ON MINOR QUESTIONS OF WORKING

CONDITIONS AND JOB DEFINITION.

3. COMMENT: SETTLEMENTS WITH NAACIE AND GAWU END WEEK LONG STOPPAGE OF WORK ON MOST SUGAR ESTATES BUT DO NOT RESOLVE REAL ISSUE OF WHO REPRESENTS FIELD AND FACTORY WORKERS. GAWU, LABOR ARM OF CHEDDI JAGAN'S PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP), IS NOT OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED BY SPA AS BARGAINING AGENT FOR WORKERS BECAUSE OF TIES TO PPP, YET GAWU'S STRENGTH IS WELL DEMONSTRATED BY STRIKE. MANPOWER CITIZEN'S ASSOCIATION (MPCA) IS RECOGNIZED BY SPA BUT SHOWED NO ABILITY TO CONTROL WORKERS DURING STRIKE. STAGE IS NOW SET FOR LABOR MINISTER CARRINGTON TO PUSH FURTHER HIS PLAN TO EXTEND HIS OWN CONTROL BY ESTABLISHMENT OF SUGAR COUNCIL WITH GOVERNMENT, EMPLOYER, AND WORKER MEMBERS TO DEAL WITH LABOR RELATIONS IN SUGAR INDUSTRY. RECENT STRIKE IS ONLY FIRST ROUND IN THIS THREE CONCERNED STRUGGLE BETWEEN GAWU, MPCA, AND CARRINGTON FOR POWER OVER GUYANA'S LARGEST SINGLE GROUP OF WORKERS. KING

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